



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 107

2 WHEREAS, Changes over the past several decades in federal  
3 and state laws defining crimes, prescribing sentences for  
4 crimes, prescribing and limiting services and treatment for  
5 persons incarcerated for crimes, and setting conditions and  
6 services post-release from prison or jail have resulted in  
7 staggering increases in the numbers of persons with past  
8 criminal convictions; and

9 WHEREAS, Between 1970 and 2001, the Illinois prison  
10 population increased by more than 500 percent, from 7,326 to  
11 44,348; and

12 WHEREAS, Nationwide, over 650,000 men and women, a figure  
13 larger than the entire population of Boston or Washington, DC,  
14 will be released from state and federal confinements in 2006;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Approximately 244,000 men and women are currently  
17 under correctional supervision in Illinois, including those in  
18 jail, in prison, on probation, and on parole; and

19 WHEREAS, Almost all - between 95 and 97 percent - of those  
20 who are incarcerated or detained in the United States will  
21 serve their time and come home; and

22 WHEREAS, Over the past several decades enactment of and  
23 changes to federal and state laws limiting opportunities for  
24 employment, as well as education, housing, public assistance,  
25 and other aspects of civil life, for persons with criminal  
26 convictions have resulted in high barriers to those persons'  
27 success in society after they have served the sentences for  
28 their convictions; and

29 WHEREAS, Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich convened the

1 Statewide Community Safety and Reentry Working Group and  
2 Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley convened the Mayoral Policy  
3 Caucus on Prisoner Reentry to study prisoner reentry, and the  
4 reports and recommendations from those groups are becoming  
5 available in 2006; and

6 WHEREAS, Barriers to employment and job promotion for  
7 persons with criminal convictions are extremely complex  
8 issues, involving, among others, public employers at all levels  
9 of government, private employers, labor organizations,  
10 education and training institutions, public safety officials,  
11 public and private licensing and certification bodies,  
12 insurers, employment placement agencies, custodians of and  
13 users of arrest and conviction records, drug treatment  
14 agencies, and persons with criminal records; and

15 WHEREAS, A thorough examination of the barriers to  
16 employment for people with criminal conviction records and a  
17 thorough study of ways in which such barriers could be lowered  
18 or eliminated without exposing employers, individuals, the  
19 general public, or property to unreasonable risk is warranted;  
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
22 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
23 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is hereby established a  
24 Legislative Task Force on Employment of Persons with Past  
25 Criminal Convictions; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall have the following  
27 members:

28 12 voting members, as follows: 3 members of the Senate  
29 appointed by the president of the Senate, 3 members of the  
30 Senate appointed by the Senate Minority Leader, 3 members of  
31 the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the  
32 House of Representatives, and 3 members of the House of

1 Representatives appointed by the House Minority Leader; and be  
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That all actions of the Task Force require the  
4 affirmative vote of at least 7 voting members; and be it  
5 further

6 RESOLVED, That the following persons shall serve without  
7 compensation as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Task  
8 Force:

9 (A) The Director of the Illinois Department of  
10 Corrections, or his or her designee;

11 (B) The Director of the Illinois Department of  
12 Employment Security, or his or her designee;

13 (C) The Secretary of the Illinois Department of Human  
14 Services, or his or her designee;

15 (D) The Director of the Illinois Department of Children  
16 and Family Services, or his or her designee;

17 (E) The Secretary of the Illinois Department of  
18 Financial and Professional Regulation, or his or her  
19 designee;

20 (F) The Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity,  
21 or his or her designee; and

22 (G) The Chairman of the Illinois Human Rights  
23 Commission, or his or her designee; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the departments of State government and the  
25 Illinois Human Rights Commission represented on the Task Force  
26 shall work cooperatively to provide administrative support for  
27 the Task Force; the Department of Employment Security shall be  
28 the primary agency in providing that support; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the voting members of the Task Force shall  
30 select a chairperson; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall conduct public

1 hearings and examine the barriers faced by persons with past  
2 criminal convictions with respect to obtaining employment; and  
3 be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall evaluate those  
5 recommendations made by the Governor's Statewide Community  
6 Safety and Reentry Working Group; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall report its findings and  
8 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly in a  
9 final report which shall be filed on or before October 31,  
10 2006; the requirement for reporting to the General Assembly  
11 shall be satisfied by filing copies of the report with the  
12 Speaker, the Minority Leader and the Clerk of the House of  
13 Representatives and the President, the Minority Leader and the  
14 Secretary of the Senate and the Legislative Research Unit, as  
15 required by Section 3.1 of the General Assembly Organization  
16 Act, and filing additional copies with the State Government  
17 Report Distribution Center for the General Assembly as required  
18 under paragraph (t) of Section 7 of the State Library Act; and  
19 be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the report shall include, but need not be  
21 limited to, the following:

22 (1) An assessment of those collateral consequences of a  
23 criminal conviction which impede employment of persons  
24 with past criminal convictions, and the experiences of  
25 other states in addressing this issue;

26 (2) An assessment of the preparation for gainful  
27 employment provided to those incarcerated in Illinois  
28 correctional facilities, and the experiences of other  
29 states in addressing this issue;

30 (3) An identification of the barriers which impede  
31 those with criminal records from obtaining stable  
32 employment; and

33 (4) Recommendations for legislative changes necessary

1 to facilitate the employment of persons with past criminal  
2 convictions which, if implemented, would not expose the  
3 employer, an individual, the general public, or property to  
4 unreasonable risks; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That within 60 days after the filing of the  
6 report, the appropriate standing committees of both the House  
7 and the Senate shall hold hearings to consider the  
8 recommendations made by the Task Force; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this Resolution be  
10 transmitted to the ex-officio members of the Task Force.